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# THE Baptist Record

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No. 20

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION SINCE 1877

## BRIEFS

### MN. GOV VETOES ABORTION BILLS

ST. PAUL, Minn. (BP) — Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton on May 10 vetoed a pair of bills that would have limited the use of state funds for abortions and imposed licensing standards on abortion clinics. Minnesota taxpayers fund 43% of abortions in the state and since 1995 have paid more than \$23 million to cover 77,000 abortions. Pro-life advocates, including the Minnesota Citizens for Life and the Minnesota Family Council, accused Dayton of disrespecting women and taxpayers.

### B. AGEE TO LEAD CALIF. BAPTISTS

FRESNO, Calif. (BP) — Bill Agee has been elected as executive director of the California Southern Baptist Convention Executive Board in Fresno. The 64-year-old is currently minister of church planting and revitalization at First Church in Woodstock, Ga. He replaces Fermin A. Whittaker, who retired after 22 years in that position. Agee has served as a pastor, church planter, director of missions, and a staff member at the North American Mission Board. He becomes the eighth executive director to lead the 77-year-old state convention comprised of 1,800 churches ministering to 450,000 members.

### WAY CLEARED FOR CHARLES ELECTION

PHOENIX (BP) — Oklahoma pastor Brad Graves has announced the withdrawal of his candidacy for Southern Baptist Convention Pastors' Conference president, which will virtually ensure the election of Florida pastor H.B. Charles Jr. as the first African American to hold that office. Graves told Baptist Press no one pressured him to withdraw and "it's never a loss when you can join God in His work." Charles is pastor of Shiloh Metropolitan Church in Jacksonville, FL, which has 4,000 members across two campuses. Shiloh Church also cooperates with the National Baptist Convention USA.



**GOING AWAY** — In this photograph from 1917, a local marching band of Boys Scouts and their leaders pose in front of the headquarters of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS) in Salt Lake City, Ut. (Photo courtesy of Utah State Historical Society)

## Departures hit Boy, Girl Scouts

### Mormons, Catholics: policies 'inconsistent'

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah (BP and local reports) — The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS) is pulling its older teens from the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) but said the decision is

not related to BSA policies opening Scouting to homosexual and transgender boys.

Rather, the Church said in their May 11 announcement that the BSA Venturing and Varsity programs, designed for 14- to 18-year-olds, no longer meet the

see SCOUTS on p. 6

## MBCB designs take top Fields Awards

FT. LAUDERDALE, FL. (Special) — Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) graphic arts design specialists brought home two major first place awards from the Baptist Communicators' Association in competition named for the former editor of The Baptist Record and founder of Baptist Press (BP) news service, Wilmer C. Fields.

Graphic artist Nick Lewis in the MBCB Communications Services Department won first place in the Promotion and Advertising-Media/Press Kit category for the "Tell Someone Orientation Kit." Tell Someone is MBCB's 2017 theme.

Graphic Artist Megan Young in the MBCB Communications Services Department won first place in the "Print Col-

lateral Brochure" category for The Baptist Record brochure. Young is also the layout/designer for The Record, the weekly news journal of the convention board.

"We have some great folks on this team serving the Lord and serving Mississippi Baptists," said Jim Futral, MBCB executive director-treasurer. "These two are usually in a support role helping all of us be at our best in communicating the Good News and Kingdom work across the state. In this case, the support people are in the spotlight and deservedly so."

The Record's circulation manager, Amy Massey, supervised the brochure's production.

Mississippi College in Clinton, affiliated with the Missis-

siippi Baptist Convention, had three first place finishes in the 2017 Fields Awards:

- Social Media: Campaign or Event category for "Move-In Day Countdown." Hannah Wallace and Jared Walters.

- Publications-Magazine category for "Beacon Magazine." Office of Public Relations.

- Social media-campaign or event category for "Hello Campaign." Lauren Livingston.

Mississippi College also had four second- and third-place finishes.

Baptist Press, headquartered in Nashville, won two 2017 Fields Awards for coverage of the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

In another recent awards program, the Evangelical Press

see DESIGNS on p. 7

## Inquiry into ERLC concerns concludes

ALEXANDRIA, La. (BP) — The Louisiana Baptist Convention (LBC) Executive Board in Alexandria has concluded a study of "issues of concern" related to the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in Nashville, and issued a letter commending ERLC President Russell Moore for "confessing his failings."

The letter, addressed to the ERLC president and trustees, also urged Moore "to listen carefully and respectfully to Southern Baptists even as we listen to him."

The LBC Executive Board voted to report to the convention's annual meeting in November "that it has evaluated the complaints lodged against the ERLC, that its leadership has met with Dr. Moore and has sent a letter to the trustees of the ERLC, and encourages the churches to continue their generous financial support for all our convention work," according to a May 11 report by Louisiana's Baptist Message news journal.

Eddie Wren, president of the LBC Executive Board and pastor of First Church,

see ERLC on p. 6

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## From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

### Not just another holiday

As we get closer to another Memorial Day observance on May 29, there will be fireworks, food, and fun from sea to shining sea. Americans do like this national holiday that kicks off another sure-to-be-eventful summer, but I sometimes fear it has become more of a generic day off work and less of a recognition of the sober meaning of the day.

That just shouldn't be. It may no longer be politically correct to express patriotism for one's country and that may be the path a lot of Americans take on this Memorial Day, but it is unconscionable to forget the people who sacrificed so much to make possible this annual observance.

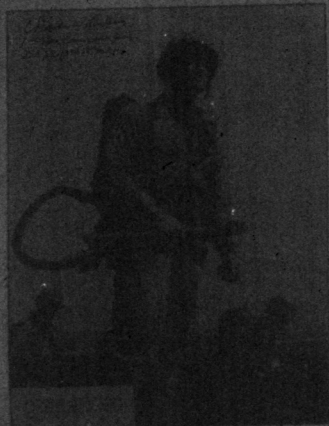
When Charles W. Lindberg of Udina, Minnesota, died in 2007, it was noted that he was the last living member of the group of U.S. Marines that first raised the American flag over Mt. Suribachi on the tiny volcanic island of Iwo Jima in World War II, during one of the most gruesome battles in human history.

As the Allies tightened the noose around Japan in the south Pacific, it became clear that a number of outlying islands around the Japanese mainland would have to be taken by force. One of those outlying islands was heavily-fortified Iwo Jima. When U.S. Marines came ashore on February 19, 1945, what ensued is beyond human comprehension.

Of 22,000 Japanese defenders, American fighters killed nearly 21,000 of them by the time American commanders declared the island secured on March 26. That's an over 95% fatality rate. At 27,909 casualties with 6,825 killed in action, those same American fighters saw the number of American dead and wounded on that one tiny island grow to greater than the total Allied numbers on D-Day in Europe.

It was that bad, and in the midst of the chaos was 24-year-old Charles Lindberg mauling his flamethrower. By the morning of February 25, Lindberg and five other Marines had managed to fight their way to the top of Mount Suribachi on the strategic southern end of the island. It was there they raised a small American flag on a makeshift pole.

"Down below, the troops started to cheer, the ships' whistles went off. It was just something that you would never forget," he told Associated Press in a 2003 interview.



LINDBERG ON IWO JIMA

What isn't well known is the fact that Lindberg and his five comrades were not the Marines depicted in the famous Joe Rosenthal photograph on which the U.S. Marine Corps Memorial in Washington, D.C., is based. The Rosenthal photograph was taken some time later when an officer ordered a larger flag to be raised on Mount Suribachi, for a second time.

Lindberg was awarded a Silver Star and a Purple Heart for his actions on Iwo Jima. Because people would ask him which Marine he was in the iconic photograph, he spent the rest of his life explaining that the Rosenthal photograph was not the first American flag raised on Mount Suribachi that day. He felt an obligation to do that, because three of the original flag-raisers never made it off the island. They were killed in action.

As the years passed, fewer and fewer people understood or really cared about the real story of the Iwo Jima flag raisings. Even when Lindberg was invited to the dedication of the U.S. Marine Memorial in 1954, he arrived to find the names of the second set of flag-raisers etched on the monument.

Lindberg returned home to his electrician's job and lived the rest of his life without fanfare, although the Minnesota Legislature passed a resolution in his honor in 1995 and his name is listed on the black granite wall of Soldiers Field in Rochester.

I wanted to be sure you knew his incredible life story on Memorial Day, because there were many more just like him who never made it home. We owe them much.

## CP: Best of the Best

As Southern Baptists, we have one thing that unites us. At our core is the passion to take the Gospel of Christ to those who have never heard. We work together toward that common goal. As a child and young adult, my heart was sealed for missions. I am a product of the Cooperative Program (CP).

The CP is Southern Baptists' unified plan of giving through which cooperating Southern Baptist churches give a percentage of their undesignated receipts in support of their respective state convention missions and ministries and the Southern Baptist Convention's missions and ministries.

Nearly 40 years ago, my tiny Southern Baptist church participated in a World Missions Conference (later called On Mission Celebrations). That was my first opportunity to be up close and personal with missionaries. More than 70% of your national CP dollars are at work in the United States and around the world supporting missionaries.

A new pastor's wife introduced our church to Acteens and my life changed forever. National Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) does not receive CP allocations. However, many state WMU offices are funded through state CP dollars.

I felt God's call on my life as a youth while serving on the missions camp staff of a state Baptist camp supported by the CP. Statewide youth events helped me mature as a Christ follower.

During this time, I met many who served through our state convention office. They took an interest in me. Those heroes of the faith called me by name. It made a difference.

In college, I participated in a CP-funded Baptist Student Union ministry. It was one of the greatest discipling influences of my life. During this time, I also served on an associational WMU council. I developed as an associational WMU leader by attending statewide training events sponsored by the CP.

Every semester of seminary, a receipt showed a portion of my tuition was subsidized by a gift to CP. As newly appointed North American Mission



### Guest opinion

with Sandy Wisdom-Martin



COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

Board missionaries, we were challenged to always express appreciation for gifts to the CP.

I needed no convincing. For nearly 20 years, I served on state convention staffs in Arkansas and Illinois. I saw firsthand how gifts to the CP meant people had the opportunity to hear and respond to the Gospel of Christ.

Southern Baptists, I am grateful for the difference you made in my life through gifts to the CP. Thank you for your partnership in my home state, the United States, and the world to proclaim the hope found only in Christ.

"But you will receive power," we read in Scripture, "when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8 NIV).

Father, stir our hearts. May we have a passion for taking the Gospel to the lost. Free us from distractions. Give us the energy and resolve to work together to declare Your glory to the nations.

Wisdom-Martin is executive director/treasurer of national WMU in Birmingham, AL. Her commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for style and clarity.

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### BAPTISTS

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# So. Baptist takes up defense of the vulnerable

**NEW YORK (BP and local reports)** — In an age of partisan conflict, few causes unite people of faith and defenders of secularism like the human trafficking crisis that enslaves nearly 50 million people around the world.

However, if you ask someone how they feel about those who are forcibly prostituted, who are homeless, and who are undocumented in their communities, their responses may be different — even hostile. That's because presuppositions often blind people to the reality that many are victims trapped in forms of slavery whether it be for sex or domestic servitude, says modern-day abolitionist Raleigh Sadler.

"When we say, 'Look at that bum!' or 'Oh she's just having sex for money!' we're inferring upon them a narrative we've chosen," Sadler says. "We take someone who could be victimized and we label them a perpetrator."

In January 2017, Sadler launched Let My People Go, a nonprofit ministry headquartered in New York City to empower local churches to fight human trafficking.

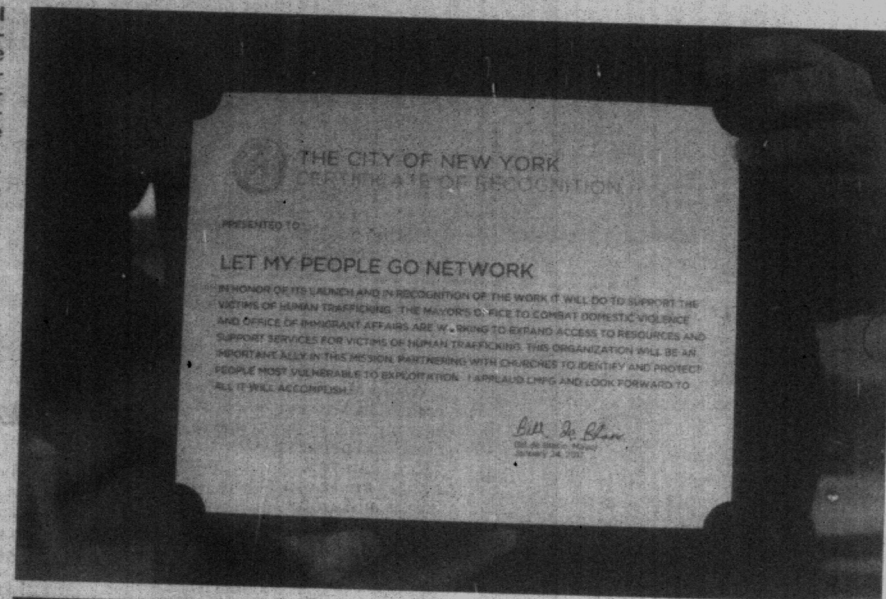
The launch event at Calvary St. George's Episcopal Parish — also known to be the birthplace of Alcoholics Anonymous — featured a certificate of recognition from New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, a Democrat, and leading voices in the justice movement like evangelist Kevin Palau and Richard Lee of International Justice Mission in Washington, D.C.

It took losing everything for Raleigh Sadler to find his calling. In April 2012, one of his best friends and seminary roommate Davin Hendrickson died of beta cell lymphoma. Concurrently, his job at the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists was eliminated due to budget cuts.

Sadler sold everything he owned and on Oct. 7, 2012, moved to New York City as a Missions Service Corps missionary with the North American Mission Board (NAMB).

"I think it's something God probably calls every believer to, ultimately, giving up and just dying to yourself, and I had that opportunity," says Sadler, a 2007 master of divinity graduate from Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky. "It's been the most challenging but most rewarding time of my ministry. I've never seen God do so much in spite of me."

Sadler attended a Passion Conference in 2012 where he first experienced his calling to minister to vulnerable people. He had served as collegiate evangelism director for the West Virginia convention since 2010 but began to feel he



placed too much emphasis on earning God's favor by his success in ministry.

His eyes were opened to the growing crisis of human trafficking and his ability to make a difference and as his friend was dying of cancer, Sadler relied on God's guidance on his own future.

"As I work with vulnerable people and mobilize churches to care for vulnerable people I'm reminded of my own vulnerabilities, my own brokenness, my own need for grace, which ultimately motivates me to go even deeper with it," he says.

At the time, West Virginia was one of four states that had not adopted legislation to aid victims of human trafficking. Compelled to action, Sadler lobbied a friend in the governor's office and when HB 4053 was drafted, he organized local churches to rally at the capitol.

The bill passed the legislature in March 2012 and was signed into law the following month by the governor.

"That is where God gave me a passion for mobilization," Sadler says.

Six months later, he began raising support to serve with NAMB in Manhattan. Within a week of his arrival, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship recruited Sadler to mobilize churches to its Price of Life Invitational, a year-long anti-trafficking program that educated New York City college students on the crisis and raised money to support victims.

Let My People Go began as a panel discussion during this time informing churches on how to identify and respond to trafficking. Following the Price of Life finale, Sadler became director of justice ministries at Metropolitan New York Association.

The connections he established with churches in the New York City area allowed Sadler to form the nonprofit Let My People Go. For the last four years, Let My People Go has grown from panel discussions to a pilot project with 25

**PASSIONATE ABOUT MINISTRY** — Raleigh Sadler, who moved to New York City in 2012 intent on helping vulnerable people, has launched the nonprofit ministry Let My People Go to empower local churches to fight human trafficking. Let My People Go received a certificate of recognition from Democrat New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio upon its formal launch earlier this year. (BP photos)

churches of different ethnic and evangelical groups, and now a national network.

"Love should identify those most vulnerable. Love should empower those most vulnerable. We should protect those most vulnerable and actually include them in our congregations," Sadler said at the Jan. 24 launch event, outlining key components of his church strategy.

"Our vision is to see a network of churches rise up and serve their community. Not the neighbor of their choosing, but the neighbor God chose for them by placing them in that community."

Put simply, Sadler says, "Human trafficking is the exploitation of vulnerabilities for commercial gain," a definition that can manifest as commercial sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, or forced labor that can prompt ministry opportunities with both victims and perpetrators.

The beauty of the Gospel, Sadler says, is that Christ died not only for the victim but the victimizer, "and we should seek to love both appropriately, and ultimately know that God has put them in our path."

Sadler said Let My People Go aims to equip local churches with specific, contextualized strategies for identifying people in their congregations and communities whom traffickers target, and then assist in building relationships with law enforcement and community leaders working together to help free and restore victims.

Churches who join the Let My People Go network receive practical justice resources and one-on-one training.

Seth Polk, lead pastor of Cross Lanes Church in Cross Lanes, W.V., serves as the chairman of Let My People Go board of directors. He's known Sadler for seven years and believes Let My People Go is unique among social justice ministries because it's "biblically focused and theologically grounded" and "mobilizes the local church, which is the greatest resource."

"The local church is the closest to those who are most vulnerable," Polk said in an interview, "so they have the greatest opportunity to see the needs within their own communities and the vulnerable people that are right around them and minister to them."

Polk said his "hope and prayer would be that local churches would gain a clearer perspective of the possibility of what they can do in their community, and that the ground force of the work would be from believers in those churches carrying out the work."

Sadler says churches who commit to social justice ministry will find it aligns with core Gospel values, especially among congregations who strive to be multi-ethnic. Vulnerable people, he says, are multi-ethnic so welcoming them into a congregation can accomplish that Kingdom vision.

Christians should share Moses' concern for the spiritual freedom of the enslaved when caring for those trapped in physical bondage, Sadler says.

"The name, Let My People Go, is definitely not original," he says. "We generally stop at those four words, but Moses goes on to say, 'Let my people go that they may serve Him' — the physical and spiritual tied together. ... God cares about our physical well-being as well as our spiritual well-being."

There is a greater exodus, Sadler says. "We have this redemption being bought back from spiritual slavery."

For more information on Let My People Go, visit [lmpgnet-work.org](http://lmpgnet-work.org).

*Editor's note: This article originally appeared in Southern Seminary Magazine's spring 2017 issue, and appears here courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for style and clarity.*

The first weekend of March 2014 brought about some sad experiences because of two unrelated and different drivers in various parts of the state driving on the wrong side of the road and going in the wrong direction. Lives were lost and others sustained severe injuries in addition to the physical destruction that took place. One who was killed was a young student at William Carey University. According to the authorities, early on Sunday morning a drunk driver was traveling the wrong way when he hit the student's car and seriously injured his wife.

There are a number of reasons why people can get on the highway traveling in the wrong direction. They may be traveling through the area and not be familiar with the traffic patterns. They could be on medication, suffering from some mental confusion, or they could be on drugs or drinking. If you have ever been traveling down the road and suddenly saw a vehicle coming your way on the wrong side, you know that immediately your thoughts are charged with fear and uncertainty of what the driver is going to do and even more importantly what you can do to get out of the way.

Sadly, as I heard of these incidents over that weekend I thought of some wonderful people who I had the privilege of being their pastor and was a part of the grief and loss as they were killed under the same circumstances. Unfortunately, people getting on the wrong side of the road takes place more often than we might realize. To be honest, sometimes it is us on the wrong side. Recently I was driving in one of our Mississippi towns that had just in the past few years changed their traffic patterns to a number of one way streets in their downtown section. I knew the town well but I did not know of the changes. As I turned on a street and started down the block, I noticed that there were cars parked on both sides of the road and all of the cars were facing my way.



## On the Wrong Side

Looking farther down that same road, I saw a car coming toward me in my lane, the right lane. I realized I was on a one way street though I had not seen any sign. I probably was not going 15 miles an hour. I blinked my lights quickly and pulled over as far as I could to the right until I could find a place to turn around. The person coming toward me was not going fast either. He slowed down, pulled over in the other lane, and I waved at him and tried to express my apologies. Within a hundred feet or so I was able to turn around and go the right way.

Getting on the wrong side of the road takes place far more often when we are not in a car or truck, and we start going the wrong way. No doubt many of you are familiar with the fact that one of the significant words for sin in the New Testament literally means to miss the mark, take the wrong road, or be going the wrong way. In fact, that is what sin is. It is getting in the lane that goes in the direction contrary to God's direction. Whether we see it in Scripture or in our daily activities in our society, it can be a frightening and destructive thing.

You begin to wonder what happens to us and what goes wrong with our relationships. What creates these

disturbances in our families? What ruins the friendships that we enjoy? What disrupts our churches? What creates all of the conflict and hurt in our nation? What is it that erupts in destruction, war, and hatred between nations? When you realize that every one of us at some time or other may decide that we will take a turn that goes the wrong way, you begin to understand. It can result in death, and at other times it results in serious misunderstandings. Sometimes it just creates deep emotional trauma that stays with us potentially for a lifetime.

Can you imagine how our decisions to get on the wrong roads of life and travel down them must bring pain to the heart of God? At times we willingly disobey Him and head off down the road that we want to travel at 70 miles an hour. He knows that the further we go the more tragic it can become. He knows what it can do to us, and He fully understands what our decisions can do to the hearts and lives of those around us. It sounds terribly simplistic and almost unrealistic for us to say that the problem in our world is sin, yet the fact is that sin is the problem in our world. All of us choose to go down the path that we want rather than going in the direction that He has outlined for us. Still in the midst of all of

the chaos, confusion, and hurt that we may bring about, He loves us. He wants us to choose the right road.

In Jesus' message in the Sermon on the Mount He said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there at: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:13-14). When a person takes the wrong road, he is suddenly facing the danger and destruction that it can bring to his own life but that is not all because he is affecting everyone else that he meets on the road. Some he may know and others may be total strangers and yet his decision affects all of them. Beyond just those he sees and meets on his wrongly chosen path are those who hear about where he has gone and what he has done. The waves of disappointment, destruction, death, and sorrow seem to spread across the emotional landscape of his life and yet, our great God still loves us and points us in the right direction.

Thanks be to God that He still loves us and reaches out to us at times, amazingly protecting us and at other times reclaiming us from the network of folks traveling in the wrong direction. What can we do in a world that is plagued with all of these kinds of wrongs? We can trust God and ask Him to keep us on the right road and traveling in the right direction. We need Him every moment to steer us through a maze of others who may not want to travel in the same direction we are supposed to go. We must trust Him even when things seem to be so tragically wrong that He is able to bring about good out of the brokenness. If you wonder whether that can ever be, you only need to look at the cross, the tomb, and the empty grave. God reached down in love and power and said, "Because Jesus lives, you can live also."

The author can be contacted at [directions@mbcb.org](mailto:directions@mbcb.org).

## Revivals & Homecomings

► **Mt. Gilead, Meridian:** Homecoming, May 21; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 10:45 a.m., followed by dinner on the grounds; special offering for cemetery fund; Jim Rickles, speaker; Carla Cloutier, worship leader.

► **Moss Hill Church, New Albany:** Homecoming, May 21; singing, 10:30 a.m., followed

by worship service and dinner; Tom Sumrall, speaker; Charlie Ransier, pastor.

► **Bellevue Church, Thaxton:** Homecoming, May 21, 11 a.m., followed by fellowship meal; Lee Graham, speaker.

► **Wayside Church, Scobey:** Memorial Homecoming, May 21; services, 10:45 a.m., followed by covered dish meal.

► **Rock Hill Church, Rankin County:** Homecoming and 125th anniversary, May 21, 10:30 a.m.

► **Airport Church, Grenada:** Homecoming, May 21; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish meal; Truman Scarborough, speaker; Mr. and Mrs. Brandon Clayton, music.

## OBITUARY

**Joe Phillip Crout**, 65, long time Mississippi Baptist pastor, died May 2. He was born in Raleigh to the late J. Paul Crout and Etoile White Crout. He attended Raleigh High School in Raleigh, University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, and Millsaps College in Jackson. He received his master of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees from New Orleans Seminary. Crout was a Baptist minister for over 30 years, beginning at New Sardis Church, Mt. Olive. He served as pastor of Kilnichael Church, Kilnichael; Salem Church, Collins;



CROUT

and Lakeshore Church, Jackson. He recently retired as pastor of Georgetown Church, Georgetown. Crout also taught classes at Mercy House Teen Challenge in Georgetown. Survivors include his wife of 42 years, Jerrie Allen Crout of Byram; sons, Jared Crout of Byram and Nathanael (Elizabeth) Crout of Brandon; daughter, Lauren Crout (Antonio Hayes) of Byram; brothers, Paul (Nancy) Crout of Pearl and John (Becky) Crout of Mendenhall; sister, Dorothy Bryant of Prentiss; and one granddaughter. Memorial service was held May 13 at First Church, Byram, with visitation prior to the service. Chancellor Funeral Home in Byram was in charge of arrangements. Online guest book available at [chancellorfuneralhome.com](http://chancellorfuneralhome.com).

## BIBL i O C I P H E R

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ZNKE GXK HKLUXK SE LGIK.  
NUYKG YKBKT; ZCU

Clue: T = N

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Daniel 5:5

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, © 2005



What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS.

May 18, 2017

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

Matthew 10:27 NAS



## CELEBRATING THE SEASONS OF A LEADER'S LIFE



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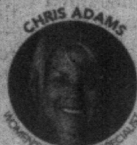
8:00 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.  
DOORS OPEN AT 7:30 A.M.

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LEADERS AND THEIR  
LEADERSHIP TEAMS

ASSOCIATIONAL WMU  
MISSIONS LEADERSHIP

CHURCH MISSIONS  
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DESIRE TO BECOME MORE  
EFFECTIVE LEADERS



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# CMM

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BRIAN MILLS SPEAKING

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## 2017 MISSISSIPPI BSU SUMMER MISSIONARIES

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Pray this day for...

May 19 - June 8, 2017

*"praying at all times in the Spirit... To that end keep alert with perseverance, making supplication for all the saints..."*

*Ephesians 6:18 (ESV)*

Pray for: **Floyd & Sylvia Wingo**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through strategy coordination.

Pray for: **Charles & Shannon Worthy**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through community outreach & encounter.

Pray for: **James & Mary Adair**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through church planting, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Bethany Allen**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through community outreach/encounter.

Pray for: **Richard & Martha Seal**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through financial administration, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Karl & Peggy Wallace**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through mission administration, church outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **David & Regina White**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church planting, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Karen Brown**, missionary ministering to American Peoples through nursing.

Pray for: **Matthew Burks**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through general evangelism.

Pray for: **Rebekah Clark**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through youth evangelism.

Pray for: **Cindy DeMars**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Guy DeMars**, missionary ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through hospitality coordination.

Pray for: **Thomas & Kerri Dewett**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Aaron & Tiffany Epps**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Sheila Flowers**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through administration.

Pray for: **Clarence Frank & Phoebe Harrison**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples.

Pray for: **Kenneth & Kimberly Hatcock**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Earl & Ramona Hewitt**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through medicine, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Cynthia Hodgins**, missionary ministering to Deaf Peoples through church/home outreach & evangelism.

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# HOUSE TOPS





**SOON TO CLOSE?** — Central Baptist Church in Vladivostok, Russia, is one of the non-Russian Orthodox churches that could be in danger of forcible closure by the national government if persecution of Christian churches continues to increase in the formerly communist country. Many missionaries have already been hounded out of Russia. (Wikimedia Commons photo by Andrey Dementev)

## Russian church shutdowns predicted to spread, worsen

**ORYOL, Russia (BP)** — Russia's recent nationwide outlawing of Jehovah's Witnesses will likely ricochet and strike other religions outside of Russian Orthodoxy, said a Baptist missionary forced to shut down his church in central Russia.

"The repression that has already started, in my opinion, it is likely to continue to get worse," Donald Ossewaarde told Baptist Press (BP) by telephone from his home in Oryol. "I don't see any sign that the Russian government is having a change of heart."

Ossewaarde, an Independent Baptist, has exhausted his appeals in Russia on an August 2016 conviction of operating a church without a permit under the 2016 anti-religion Yarovaya Law, and is making plans to return May 8 to his home in Elgin, Ill.

The Baptist ministry he had legally operated since 2002 will cease in the nation where Ossewaarde said every religion outside Russian Orthodoxy is considered a cult, including Protestantism.

"I think the Orthodox Church is on a roll," Ossewaarde told BP. "They're emboldened. They've had some success in using the government to close down competitors. I would expect that they will continue along the same lines."

In one of Russia's latest acts of religious oppression, the nation's Supreme Court on April 20 declared Jehovah's Witnesses an extremist group, allowing the government to seize the assets of the church's headquarters and 395 local chapters with

170,000 adherents, the TASS Russian news agency reported from Moscow.

The ruling has not been implemented because of the appeal process, TASS said.

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom just classified Russia as one of the world's worst violators of religious liberty, recommending in its 2017 annual report that the U.S. government deem Russia a "country of particular concern" under the International Religious Freedom Act and negotiate for religious liberty.

Russia's religious discrimination and criminalization of Jehovah's Witnesses in particular should concern all evangelical Christians, Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. said in The Briefing, his daily news and opinion podcast.

"A government that could identify the Jehovah's Witnesses as an extremist group and make the group illegal is the same government that can identify Presbyterians or Lutherans or Baptists as an extremist group," Mohler said, "simply because what is taught runs contrary to some aspect of what is affirmed by the Russian President and his increasingly autocratic state."

Russia criminalized the group for its beliefs rather than its actions, Mohler noted, albeit the group's beliefs are counter to Southern Baptist theology.

"The Jehovah's Witnesses were here identified as an extremist group," Mohler said. "Now the bottom line in the political reality is that Jehovah's Witnesses lacked the political patronage and protection of

anyone inside or outside Russia to keep the Russian government through its Supreme Court from making this declaration and thus making it illegal — and that means punishable by prison time — for anyone to be organized and involved with the Jehovah's Witnesses."

The Independent Baptist congregation Ossewaarde led will likely watch a livestream of a service from another city, Ossewaarde said.

"In order for them to continue something after I'm gone, they have to file papers with the authorities and put their name on a list saying they are a religious group," Ossewaarde told BP. "We discussed it for a long time. When it came right down to making a decision, they said we are not ready to put our names on a government list. As far as a meeting place here in our city, there won't be anymore."

Russia has several denominational congregations outside Orthodoxy that Ossewaarde describes as "good Christian people" but theologically errant. Among differences, Russian denominational churches including Baptists believe that professed Christians can lose their salvation.

"The particular type of ministry we had," Ossewaarde said, "there really is nothing exactly like we had."

Ossewaarde is selling his Oryol home and church building, resigning his position with Baptist International Missions Inc. and taking a deanship with Providence College in Elgin, Ill., a ministry of Northwest Bible Baptist (Independent) Church.

## Appeals court rules owner can decline business

**LEXINGTON, Ky. (BP and local report)** — The Kentucky Court of Appeals in Frankfort on May 12 ruled 2-1 in favor of a Lexington T-shirt company's refusal to print gay pride shirts in 2012.

Hands On Originals, managed and owned by Blaine Adamson, a professing Christian, originally came under fire in 2012 when the Gay and Lesbian Services Organization in Lexington sought to hire him to print their shirts for the Lexington Pride Festival.

Adamson declined their business because he did not want to convey the messages on the T-shirts, and offered to assist the group in locating another printer. The group instead filed a complaint with the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission alleging illegal discrimination.

The Human Rights Commission ordered Adamson to print the T-shirts. Represented by Alliance Defending Freedom of Scottsdale, Az., Adamson and Hands On Originals appealed the commission's order to Fayette County Court and won.

The Kentucky Court of Appeals upheld the lower court's ruling, stating that Adamson's refusal to print the T-shirts was not refusing service to an individual based on their sexual orientation but rather, "the conduct Hands On Originals chose not to promote was pure speech. Nothing in the fairness ordinance prohibits Hands On Originals, a private business, from engaging in viewpoint or message censorship," Chief Judge Joy A. Kramer wrote in the appeals court opinion.

"While I celebrate this victory for religious liberty, I also lament that this has even been a question. No one should be compelled to act against his or her conscience in matters of faith."

**Hershael York**

**chair of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Public Affairs Committee**

"This is a clear victory for the First Amendment and for the right of people of faith not to be bullied into agreeing with views they find objectionable," said Martin Cothran, spokesman for The Kentucky Family Foundation which was started in 1989 to defend conservative family values.

"While I celebrate this victory for religious liberty, I also lament that this has even been a question," said Hershael York, chair of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Public Affairs Committee, senior pastor at Buck Run Church in Frankfort, and professor of Christian preaching at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

"No one should be compelled to act against his or her conscience in matters of faith. I'm glad the appellate court saw fit to apply the constitution correctly in this case, but I also can't help but feel that we are going to be challenged again and again by those pushing an agenda of erotic liberty over all others."

Another printer eventually produced the disputed T-shirts for free.



**ADAMSON**

## SCOUTS

cont. from p. 1

church's needs. Beginning Jan. 1, 2018, the church will start its own program in place of Venturing and Varsity.

"In most congregations in the United States and Canada, young men ages 14-18 are not being served well by the Varsity or Venturing programs, which have historically been difficult to implement within the Church," said the statement. Questions and Answers about Changes to the Young Men Program (Q&A), at [mormonnewsroom.org](http://mormonnewsroom.org).

"This change will allow youth and leaders to implement a simplified program that meets local needs while providing activities that balance spiritual, social, physical, and intellectual development goals for young men."

LDS will make an exception for 14- to 18-year-old boys who want to continue in Scouting to earn the Eagle Scout rank, saying such boys would be "registered, supported, and encouraged." The Church, based in Salt Lake City, Utah, will also continue to use BSA Boy Scout and Cub Scout programs for boys ages eight to 13.

LDS members describe themselves as followers of Christ who are recipients of later revelations after the Bible was completed, given by God to church founder Joseph Smith on buried golden plates in western New York State beginning in 1820.

LDS members consider the Book of Mormon written by Smith to be the repository of those revelations, hence the other name by which the Church is known.

BSA expressed appreciation to the Mormon Church, BSA's first and largest sponsorship partner in the U.S., and said it looks forward to continued cooperation with Mormons. Through Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts, BSA serves about 330,000 Mormon youth.

## ERLC

cont. from p. 1

Rayville, told Baptist Press (BP) he is "satisfied no other steps [need] to be taken" and asked churches to continue supporting the ERLC and other Southern Baptist causes through the Cooperative Program (CP).

The ERLC should continue to receive its current 1.65% share of the Southern Baptist Convention's CP Allocation Budget, Wren said.

Moore told BP in written comments, "I've had a great time talking with Louisiana Baptist leadership about the ways the Gospel intersects with our cultural moment. As I told their leaders recently, too, I look forward as always to partnering with Louisiana Baptists for the sake of the

Great Commission and the cause of Christ."

The LBC Executive Board's study began in response to a motion at the state convention's 2016 annual meeting requesting that the Board "study the recent actions of the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission with regard to issues of concern to Louisiana Baptists."

The convention referred the motion to its Executive Board.

Moore has drawn criticism for alleged disrespectfulness toward evangelical supporters of Donald Trump during the 2016 presidential election. In March, Moore issued a statement apologizing "for failing to distinguish" in some instances between Trump supporters who appeared to compromise core Christian principles and those who did not.

## MS POSITIONS

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1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)  
If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

## Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically

via e-mail as attachments in JPEG format. **Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted.** Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 282-3330. E-mail: [baptistrecord@mbcch.org](mailto:baptistrecord@mbcch.org)



## Crucified • Matthew 27:41-52

What a journey we have been on during the last weeks of Jesus' earthly life. He had been nothing but forthright about what was going to happen yet the disciples were caught unaware; grief and fear took the place of joy and excitement. In a mere 24 hours, they had eaten the Passover feast and learned of a traitor in their midst. Jesus had been arrested, put on trial, convicted and hung on a cross. He was subjected to mocking jeers from the religious leaders and the crowd. Then from the cross, we hear His grievous cry as He quotes Psalm 22:1, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Jesus' grief-stricken mother and John, the Beloved Disciple, watched in disbelief as the One who only showed love placed them, now mother and son, together. It happened so quickly and I am sure it was very surreal.

The sin that began in the Garden of Eden had always been atoned for by the blood of bulls and sheep. God who once walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the evening was seen only through smoke and a curtain. On this day, however, the sacrifice needed for man's sin would no longer need the blood of bulls and sheep for the ultimate cost would be paid by Jesus, God's own Son. We then hear another

cry, "Father, into Your hands I commit my Spirit," as Jesus breathed His last breath. Then, just like that, it was over. Jesus was dead. Can you imagine the anguished cries coming from Mary who only 33+ short years before, responded to the angel's announcement that she would birth the Son of God? How could this be?

Suddenly, amid the absolute stillness

there began a rumbling and shaking as darkness descended upon the whole earth. Rocks were split in half. The cries of grief turned to cries of

fear, and amid the chaos we hear the Centurion soldier cry out, "Surely this was the Son of God!" It might have seemed the earth itself was grieving but that would not be the case...death and separation was being defeated; tombs were opened and those long dead to this world walked in flesh once again. Something very dramatic had changed that day for the whole earth.



### Explore the Bible with Cyndi Grace

As electrifying as all of this was at Golgotha, something of equal importance was happening in the Holy of Holies in the Jerusalem temple. The veil that had separated God from His children for nearly a thousand years was torn from top to bottom. Scholars estimate this curtain was at least 60 feet high and 4 inches thick. Its purpose was to separate the Holy of Holies (which

housed the arc of the covenant) from the world. In all those years, very few had passed through its folds to enter that holy place. In fact,

only once a year and only by the high priest to atone for the sins of the people. Now, as the ultimate sacrifice was given, God took His Hand and split this barrier down, the middle signifying that He would again have a personal relationship with His people. This provided salvation to all who choose to follow—Jew or Gentile. No longer would there be a need for an earthly high priest...

Jesus was now our eternal high priest.

Do we in the 21st century understand this significance? Could it be that since we have always had this access we take for granted its importance? Perhaps we should contemplate it more often for at that very moment we were not only given eternal life but a personal relationship with our Creator. No longer did we need to fear God's presence as did Adam and Eve after their sin. Because of Jesus' sacrificial death, we can enter this Holy place—anytime. Hebrews 4:16 says, "Therefore let us approach, the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us at the proper time." (HCSB)

The question we should ask is, "Why don't we?" We have the opportunity as no other faith does, to walk daily with our God. He desires to meet with us in this restored fellowship; to, if you will, walk again in the cool of the evening with us. I pray as we focus on this day of His crucifixion that we will not only focus upon the salvation it brings but also the restored fellowship. It is there we will discover "life abundant."

Grace is a Bible teacher, conference leader, and member of First Church, Clinton.

## Life in the Community • Matthew 25:34-40

One litmus test that proves our faith in Christ is genuine is whether or not we are meeting the needs of people around us, both in the church and outside. In fact, from the verses we will look at this week in Matthew, one could accurately conclude that you can't truly love and serve God without loving and serving people.

The Gospel is a get-involved kind of message. When you receive Christ you come to understand the great price he paid for your salvation. Thus, the love of God takes root in your heart, motivating and inspiring you to be other-centered.

In verses 34 and 35 Jesus' promise to save those who met the needs of others, whether it was feeding the hungry, providing water to the thirsty, showing hospitality to strangers, clothing the poor and naked, caring for the sick, or visiting those incarcerated, certainly does not mean he was promoting a salvation by works doctrine. He was simply teaching that those who are truly sons and daughters of God would show it in their actions.

The Apostle James reinforces this teaching: "What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and

daily food. If one of you says to him, 'Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead" (Ja. 2:14-17 NIV).

As Christians we do good works not to be saved but because we are saved. In other words, our desire and commitment

to meet the needs of others should in no way be an attempt on our part to be accepted by God. We will never be good enough for heaven or do enough to earn entry. But through Christ's death for us, our sins have been forgiven and all our needs met, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Therefore it's natural that we want to meet the needs of others so they can have the same experience.

Paul reminds us that, "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in

advance for us to do" (Eph. 2:10 NIV). When we are meeting the needs of others we are fulfilling the purpose for which God made us. We are also offering proof of our salvation.

Serving others, however, not only allows us to fulfill our purpose and prove that we are children of God, it also brings the believer great joy. When God is using you to bless others there is no greater satisfaction that can be had. Sadly, some Christians have not experienced the fulfillment that comes from

being other-centered because they are too self-centered.

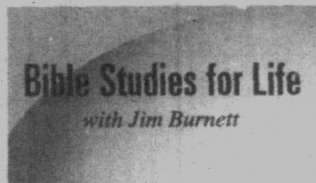
Immediately after Jesus led the Samaritan woman to faith in God, his disciples came and urged him to eat. When they offered him food, interestingly, he responded, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about" (Jn. 4:32 NIV). His answer confused them, and they wondered

among themselves if someone had brought him something to eat while they were away. Jesus continued: "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work" (Jn. 4:34 NIV). Living out God's will and allowing him to use you to meet people's needs will feed your soul, infuse your heart with joy, and bring the rich blessings of God down on your life. There is deep joy awaiting those who serve the Lord's purposes. And one of those purposes is certainly ministering to those in need.

Another powerful lesson Jesus taught in these passages, specifically verses 37-40, is that wherever there is human need, Jesus is divinely present. Therefore, anything we do for others, if we do it for the right reason, to the glory of God, is equivalent to doing it for the Lord. Wow, that's amazing to consider. Every time I help someone in the name of Jesus, I am ministering to the Lord.

God is connected to his creation. Even people who do not acknowledge him or believe in Christ are still loved by the Lord and cared for by the Lord. And because we are the hands and feet of Jesus we need to reach out to any and all who have needs.

Burnett is pastor of Willow Pointe Church, Hattiesburg.



### Bible Studies for Life with Jim Burnett



## DESIGNS

cont. from p. 1

Association (EPA) for the third year in a row named BP as its Award of Excellence recipient in the denominational (digital) category, the association's top honor for online denominational news services.

EPA, a professional association of Christian publications

and websites, has posted a complete list of award winners at [evangelicalpress.com/2017-awards-of-excellence/](http://evangelicalpress.com/2017-awards-of-excellence/).

Among grand prize winners in the 2017 Fields Awards were: ■ the Southern Baptist Convention's Gateway Seminary in Ontario, Ca. (public relations and development).

■ Baptist Foundation of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City (interactive communications).

■ Tennessee Baptist Convention in Nashville (audio-visual communication).

■ Mark Ira Hooks, communications director for Collin Association in Fairview, Texas (photography).

■ Seth Brown, content editor of North Carolina's Biblical Recorder, weekly news journal of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in Cary (news writing).

■ Harper McKay, news and information specialist at the Southern Baptist Convention's Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. (feature writing).

■ Union University (design).

Fields, a former Mississippi Baptist pastor who was editor of The Baptist Record from 1956-59, left The Record to become the first director of BP in

Nashville. He retired in 1987 as vice president of public relations for the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee in Nashville.

BCA, which is more than 60 years old, has posted a complete list of award winners at [baptistcommunicators.org/awards/](http://baptistcommunicators.org/awards/).

Editor's note: Baptist Press contributed to this article.

## Just for the Record



**CENTER CHURCH, BLUE SPRINGS**, recognized its high school graduates May 7. Shown are Sarah Palmer, Becca Gregory, Chandler Baggett, and Ryan Wallace. David Wallace, associate/youth pastor.

### In other Church News:

► The Children's Advocacy Centers of Mississippi (CACM) is sponsoring a series of special training seminars, Chaplains for Children. The training prepares attendees to recognize and respond to cases of sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. Training will be in Flowood at Table 110 May 18 - 19, 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m., and in Gulfport at the Courtyard Marriott Beachfront July 13, 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. and July 14, 8:30 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. For more information and to register, visit [www.childadvocacyms.org/events](http://www.childadvocacyms.org/events).



**GOOD HOPE CHURCH, RICHTON**, ordained and licensed Bryan Stuart to the ministry Apr. 30. Shown are pastor Anthony O'Neal, Stuart, and Stephanie Stuart.



The Sonshiners of **FIRST CHURCH, FLORA**, visited the Ark Encounter in Williamstown, Kentucky, in May. Gil Powell, Associate Pastor of Music and Senior Adults.



**FIRST CHURCH, TUPELO**, recognized its seniors with a baccalaureate service. Shown are Adam Brown, Brianna Newby, McKenzie Young, Kaleb Malone, Molly Womack, Brandi Reynolds, and Jeffrey Robinson. Matt Powell, pastor.

## Do you want to explore your history?

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